



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 30 November 1966



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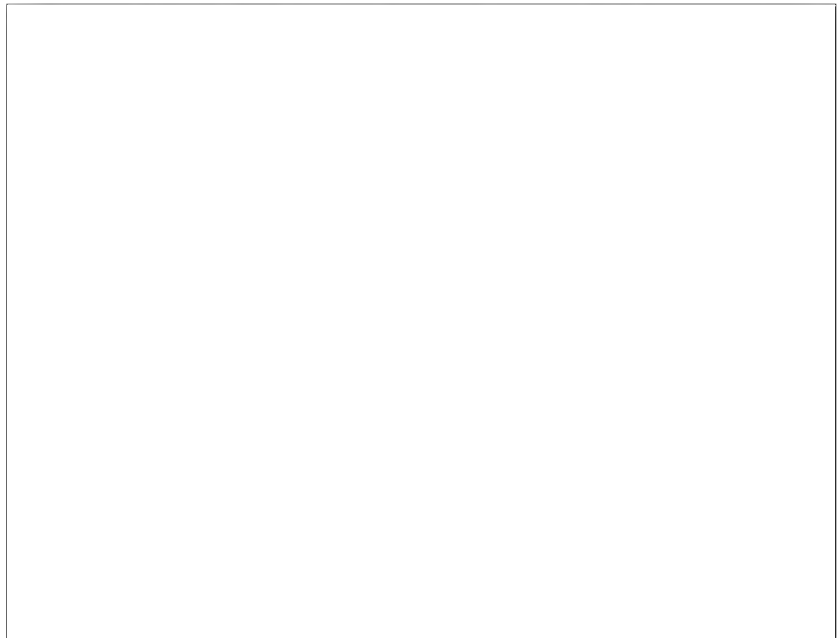
DAILY BRIEF
30 NOVEMBER 1966

1. North Vietnam

We see signs that Communist military leaders, probably shaken by the success of US search-and-destroy operations, are shifting from large-scale operations to guerrilla tactics. A discussion of this trend is today's Annex.

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2. North Vietnam



3. Soviet Union

The new Soviet spacecraft was finally brought to earth today.

This was probably the first in a series of test flights of a new vehicle for future manned space missions.

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4. West Germany

The new cabinet includes much of the best political talent in Bonn. Kiesinger's success will be measured by the degree to which he can forge an effective government out of this group of ambitious individuals, whose past feuds have been frequent and bitter.

In parliament, the new "grand coalition" will hold 447 seats to only 49 for the Free Democrats, the sole opposition party. However, after 17 years of fighting each other, the coalition parties may have trouble cooperating. Sensitive issues include the Socialists' desire to improve relations with East Europe, including East Germany, and the questions of offset and the impending budget deficit. 50X6

5. Indonesia

Moscow has agreed to permit Indonesia to reschedule its debts on terms at least as favorable as those offered by Western creditors. During the readjustment period, Moscow will provide spare parts and technical assistance on a cash basis.

Soviet military aid deliveries account for the largest single slice of the Indonesian debt and the Soviets obviously want to protect their investment. They are also urging Djakarta to move ahead with some economic aid projects already under way. These include a steel mill and a nuclear research reactor.

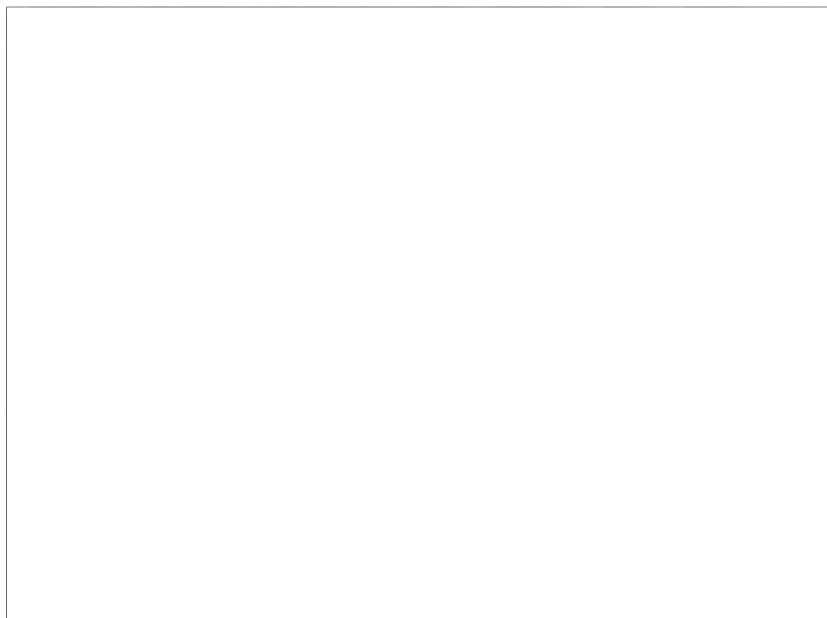
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6. Jordan

Jordan was quiet today for the first time in over ten days.

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7. Rhodesia

The Rhodesian affair has staggered into yet another final round. Neither opponent wants to allow the other to be last in the ring. Thus both continue to shadow-box long after the real issues have been settled.

Smith's latest maneuver is to make a "final" series of counterproposals to the British. These are clearly designed for public effect as a demonstration of willingness to compromise, but make no concessions on his basic position.

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ANNEX

Return to Guerrilla Warfare?

The "great debate" among North Vietnamese military leaders over whether to emphasize guerrilla operations over large-scale mobile warfare seems to have ended for the moment--in favor of the guerrillas.

Such is the message of an article written by one "Cuu Long" (Vietnamese for "Mekong") and widely publicized by the North Vietnamese. "Cuu Long" is probably the pseudonym of a senior member of the Communist hierarchy in South Vietnam. He specifically warns against "the erroneous concept" of "depending on concentrated troops" to challenge US forces to large unit combat on a regular basis. All this contrasts markedly with the weight placed on conventional warfare tactics by the Communist leadership within South Vietnam as late as last July.

The appearance of this article suggests that the leadership has made its decision. Actually such tactics have been forced on the Communists in recent months by the success of US search-and-destroy/spoiling operations, which have made it more difficult for them to mount their own large-scale operations.

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None of this means, however, that the Communists are going to pack up their gear and go home. "Cuu Long" stresses, on the contrary, that guerrilla war is admirably suited to a "protracted resistance" which will tie down enemy forces by making them spread themselves thin. Nor does he mean that the Communists will lapse into purely defensive tactics. Specifically warning against such a move, he points out that even in guerrilla warfare the object is continually to attack and harass the enemy. "To pause at the defensive is to invite the danger of being annihilated" is the way "Cuu Long" puts it. He does not rule out occasional large-scale operations, but implies that

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there must be closer coordination between the political and military actions of the guerrillas and the regular forces.

The author admits that the Communists face difficulties even if they go all out to develop the "unlimited" potential of guerrilla warfare. For instance, he notes the need for quickly expanding the number of guerrillas in the south, and implicitly criticizes the Viet Cong high command for weakening the guerrillas in 1965 by transferring cadres and men into the regular forces. Elsewhere in the article he hints that this process is already being reversed. We indeed see signs that some of the larger units are being broken down into guerrilla groups.

The Communists clearly remain confident that with these revised tactics they can chew up US forces piecemeal and ultimately inflict a politically unacceptable level of casualties.

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